

A Serious
MEDITATION

The Dealings of God with England,
and the State thereof in general.

O England! thy day of *visitation* from the *Lord*, hath been exceeding large, and his dealings with thee exceeding wonderful, when thou wast in *bondage*; and cried unto the *Lord*, he heard thee, and delivered thee from thy *oppression*: but Oh how quickly hast thou forgotten the loving kindness of the *Lord*, and the Dealings of thy *God*! Remember the *dayes* that are past when thou wast in *bondage* and *slavery*, and desired freedom to *Worship* the *Lord*, and the *Lord* heard, and granted unto thee thy desire, and also made known the way of his *Worship* within thy *Borders*, in thy *Towns*, in thy *Streets*, in thy *Assemblies*, hath the *Lord* proclaimed the *Way of Life and Salvation*, by his *Children* and *Servants*: But oh how hast thou requited the *Lord* for his loving kindness! How hast thou intreated his *Servants* with *Prisons*, *Whippings*, and *Revilings*; who bare their *Testimony* against thy *Wickedness*, against thy *Pride* and *Caveatness*, and *Idolatry*; but oh how hast thou rejected the Counsel of the *Lord*; and hath chosen thine *own ways*, and followed thine *own Counsel*, and hardened thy *heart*, and stiffened thy *neck*; even like a *Rebellious* people, that would none of the *Law* of the *Lord*, and therefore thou must eat the fruit of thy own doing, and confess that the *Lord* is just in all his *ways*, and *Righteous* in all his *judgements*; for thou hast sinned against the *Lord*, in that thou hast not performed thy *Promises*, which thou made in the *Day* of thy *Distress*; and therefore *Distress* must come upon thee again, to bring thee to remember those things and *repent*, which if thou do, the *Lord* will have mercy upon thee, and heal thy *back-slidings*; but if thou do not, but continue in thy *Rebellion*, the *Lord* will continue his *Judgements* upon thee: Should not the long-suffering of the *Lord* lead thee to *Repentance*, and his gentle dealings with thee by correction, cause thee to understand that he loves thee? but if thou wilt not receive instruction, by all his gentle dealings, but wilt go on in thy *wickedness*; What canst thou then expect, but the *Indignation* of the *Lord* to fall upon thee? What dost thou think if thou continue in persecuting the *Servants* of the *Lord*,

(10 wit) those that tell thee of thy *Wickedness*, thy *Pride* and *Covetousness*; dost thou think that that will turn the *Judgments* of God from thee? Surely nay, that will but hasten *Woe* and *Adversity* upon thy own head; Oh what a day of *visitation* hast thou had! How many times hath the *Lord* delivered thee! and now it may be said by thee, as it was once concerning *Israel* of old: *you they turned back and sought not God, and limited the fury of Israel; they despised his Word, and despised his Day when he delivered them from the Enemy*: Is not this thy condition oh *England*? although indeed the *Lord* hath a *remnant* in thee, that do not bow their *Knees* to *Baal*, nor pour out *drinks-offerings* to the *Queen of Heaven*; and this *remnant* are those which thou callest *TROUBLEERS OF THE PEACE*, which trouble *that Church*, like *Elia* troubled *Israel*, and this *remnant* that *Woman* *Jessabel* (I mean thy false Church that pains her self) would have destroyed, that so her false *Prophets* which feeds at her *Table*, might not be *Troubled*, but *Trouble* must come upon them, and their *peers* must be broken; and although *Jessabel* cause a *Fall* to be *Prophesied*, yet *God* will execute his *judgment* in thee, and if thou say in thy heart, wherefore come these things upon me? for the greatness of thine *Iniquities* are thy *skirts* discovered, and thy *heels* made bare, for the *Lord* hath seen thy *Adulteries*, and thy *Neighings*, the *Leanness* of thy *Whoredoms*, and thine *Abominations* on the *Hills*, in the *fields*; *Woe* unto thee oh *England*! Wilt thou not be made clean, when shall it once be?

Oh! What a large *profession* hath been made in thee? What a talk of *Godliness* and *Christianity*, but alas what is found in thee? Dost not *Pride* and *Envy* abound in thee? and hath not these things greatly displeased the *Lord*? and for this cause is the *anger* of the *Lord* kindled, which will *devour* the *Bryars* and *Thorns* in one day, and in that Day *whether* wilt thou *live*? and *where* wilt thou *leave* your *glory*? you that have gloried in *professing* the *Gospel* and *Ordinances*, and even made this a *Covering* for your *Wickedness* and *Abominations*, who under a pretence of *seeking* the *Glory* of *God*, have sought honour to your selves, and to make your *Names* great on the *Earth*: Is it not even thus on *England*? and, Hath not thy *Prophets* that *dream* for *money*, and thy *Priests* that *preach* for *hire*, have not they flattered thee in thy *Iniquities*? Have not they cried, *Peace* in thy *Kulers*, even until the *finger* of the *Lord* hath broken forth against them, and they have been *confounded*? And wilt thou not for all this receive *reproval* and *correction*, but still go on in thy *Wickedness* and *Rebellion* against the *Lord*? What wilt thou *come* more and more, and they more and more *draw* to

the *Servants of the Lord* : surely then more and more of the *Indignation of the Lord* thou must feel : What is it now become a trouble to thee to have him reproved in thy *gates* : Dost thou make him an offender that speaks the truth ? And do those men that *soften* against thy *Wickedness*, *break thy Peace*, the peace of thy *Rulers*, and the peace of thy *People* ? And do thy *Prophets*, that *denounce* for sinners, and *Priests* that *praise* for him, do they tell thee that it would be a happiness to thee, if thou wert rid of those men that reprove thee for thy *Wickedness* ? Do not they even raise on *England* ? And do not many of thy *People* think and say the same ? What would it be thy *happiness* to sin without reproof ? surely, nay ; for if once they whose souls are vexed with thy *filthy conversation*, were driven out of thee : then would thy *misery* come, and the Lord would make thee *desolate*, even like *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, which was overthrow, for an example of his *Righteous judgments* unto all that would not receive *instruction*.

Oh how is thy *SILVER* become *Dross* ! And thy *LIBERTY* become *bondage* ! Oh how art thou gone *backward*, and not *forward* ! even doating upon thy old *idols*, and *idolatry* that they should worship them that have set their minds thereupon ; but thou wouldest also *Compel* that *remains* in thee, that are *followers of the Lamb*, for whose sake the Lord hath long *spared* thee ; and yet thou art so foolish, and *wise*, (as much as in thee lieth) to hasten on thy own *destruction* : What may *wickedness* be *transformed* in thee, and not be reprov'd ? Is this the *Liberty* that thou now lookest after ? Wouldest thou have *Wickedness* established by a Law, and the *reprovers* thereof be condemned ? Is it not even thus within thy borders ? And yet for all this thou wilt *lean upon the Lord*, and say, is not his *mercy* on us, no evil can come upon us ? and yet *peace*, *peace*, even *destruction* come upon thee from the Lord : Oh how often hath the Lord invited thee ! and even with his *Love* sought to draw thee unto himself, but thou hast refused his *loving invitation*, and grieved his *holy Spirit* from time to time : so that if the Lord say, as he once said, concerning *Ephraim*, it is but just ; *England* is *turned to idols*, let it alone, and then *desolation* and *misery* will come upon it. When I would comfort my heart against sorrow, it is even faint within me, to consider what *WARNINGS*, from Time to Time hast thou had, and this thou hast, and dost account thy trouble : But greater trouble shall come upon thee from the Lord, except thou repent : Oh how hast thou *chosen thy own ways* and followed thy own *Councils*, and would have *Ministers of thy own making*, and *Prophets* which would flatter thee in thy *Wickedness*, and *Prophecy* smooth things

thing unto thee, even the deceit of their own hearts; and this thou hast
tried rather than plain and honest dealing; and now what shall the
 Lord do unto thee for those things? Shall not he *revenge* thee ac-
 cording to thy *ways* and *deings*? and in that day thou shalt confess to
 his *Righteous judgments*. How have thy *Priests* stirred up thy *Rulers*
 against a *harmless people*; even like as *Achaniz the Priest of Bethel*
did, who complained against *Amos the Prophet*, saying, *Amos hath in-
 spired against the King, the Land is not able to bear his words*; is it not
 even thus among thy *Priests*, Oh *England*? and alas, What have thy
People done against thee, I mean the *disaffected* *remnant* which are called
QUAKERS? What evil have they done, that thou art so mightily
 troubled? What do thy *Priests* say concerning them, do they say they
 are *Hereticks*, and such like? But *How, When, or Where* did they prove
 it against them, within thy *borders*? it is good for all thy *Inhabitants*,
 Oh *England*, to consider of this matter, and not *Impute* their *hands* in
 the *Blame* of the *Innocent*; for of a truth the Lord hath raised this *Peo-
 ple* up within thy *borders*, to make thee a happy and a blessed *Nation*;
 for even in *HIM*, in whom they have believed, the *Nations* comes to be
 blessed, even in **JESUS CHRIST** the *Covenant*, the *Light* which is
 given for *salvation* to the ends of the earth, of whom they have born,
 and do bear their *Testimony* within thy *borders*, of which *Testimony*
 they need never be *ashamed*; which if thou shouldst alwaies *reject*, and
 go on in thy *Rebellion*, thou wilt be most *Unhappy* and *Miserable*, even
 the worst of the *Nations*; and therefore it is my *desire* in the bowels of
 love, as being one of thy *Inhabitants*, who withing thy *Welfare*, and
 happiness, that thou mayest seriously *Meditate* upon the *dealings* of
 God with thee, and upon his *loving kindness* which hath been, and yet is
Tendered unto thee; and that thou mayest return to the Lord, is the
 earnest desire of my *soul*; lest it be said to thee, as *Christ* once said to
Jerusalem: O **ENGLAND ENGLAND**, thou that killest the *Pro-
 phets*, and stonest them that *testify* unto thee; how often would I have
 gathered thy *Children* together, as a *Hen* gathereth her *Chickens* un-
 der her wings, but you would not? O thou that haist *known* in this thy
Day, the things that belong to thy *peace*, how art thou hid from thine
 eyes.

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THE END.